

Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

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CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L PEKING 1934

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MARR CH KN US TW

SUBJ: PEOPLE'S DAILY KOREAN WAR EDITORIAL HINTS SOFTER LINE
ON US TROOPS

1. SUBTLE CHANGES BETWEEN THE 1978 AND 1977 PEOPLE'S DAILY EDITORIALS ON THE JUNE 25 ANNIVERSARY OF THE KOREAN WAR OUTBREAK SHOW A SLIGHT SOFTENING OF THE PRC POSITION ON THE PRESENCE OF US TROOPS ON THE KOREAN PENINSULA. WHEREAS THE 1977 EDITORIAL DEMANDED THAT THE US "WITHDRAW FROM SOUTH KOREA COMPLETELY AND IMMEDIATELY ITS GROUND, AIR AND NAVAL FORCES," THIS YEAR THE PD SAYS ONLY THAT THE US MUST "WITHDRAW ALL ITS AGRESSOR FORCES AND EQUIPMENT FROM SOUTH KOREA," WITHOUT STATING ANY TIME FRAME. WE NOTE THAT HUA KUO-FENG DURING HIS MAY VISIT TO
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NORTH KOREA ALSO AVOIDED ANY CALL FOR AN "IMMEDIATE" WITHDRAWAL.

2. THE REST OF THIS YEAR'S EDITORIAL LARGELY PARALLELS LAST YEAR'S INCLUDING THE DISMISSAL OF THE US TROOP WITHDRAWAL PLAN AS A "GESTURE" TO SATISFY WORLD PUBLIC OPINION. STRIKINGLY, HOWEVER, THERE IS NO

MENTION THIS YEAR OF THE 1950 DISPATCH TO KOREA OF THE CHINESE PEOPLE'S VOLUNTEERS, A STAPLE ITEM IN PAST YEARS' EDITORIALS. WHILE CHINESE PUBLIC STATEMENTS HAVE REFERRED TO THE CPV ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS IN THE PAST FEW MONTHS, INCLUDING HUA'S VISIT TOPHONGYANG, THE ABSENCE OF ANY REFERENCE FROM THIS YEAR'S EDITORIAL IS ALMOST SURELY DELIBERATE AND MAY BE AN EFFORT TO QDOWNPLAY THE POSSIBILITY OF FUTURE CHINESE MILITARY INVOLVEMENT ON NORTH KOREA'S SIDE.

3. THIS YEAR, AS IN THE PAST, THE EDITORIAL INCLUDES A PASSAGE ON THE LIBERATION OF TAIWAN. THERE ARE TWO CHANGES WORTHY OF NOTE: THE ABSENCE OF ANY STATEMENT THAT TAIWAN IS AN INTERNAL AFFAIR OF CHINA IN WHICH NO ONE HAS THE RIGHT TO INTERVENE, AND THE INCLUSION OF A REFERENCE, NEW THIS YEAR, TO THE "BEHESTS OF CHAIRMAN MAO AND PREMIER CHOU" TO LIBERATE TAIWAN AND UNIFY THE MOTHERLAND. WE HAVE NO EXPLANATION FOR THE OMISSION OF THE STANDARD STATEMENT N OUTSIDE INTERFERENCE, ALTHOUGH IT IS HIGHLY DOUBTFUL THAT THIS IS INTENDED TO SUGGEST ANY CHANGE IN THE CHINESE POSITION ON TAIWAN, WHICH HAS BEEN REAFFIRMED REPEATEDLY IN OTHER CONTEXTS. THE REFERENCE TO MAO AND CHOU'S BEHESTS SEEMS DESIGNED TO STRESS THAT REUNIFICATION IS AN UNSHAKEABLE GOAL OF THE PRC.

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